

Inner Voice

Issue
one



This issue:
The End review
Story out of Sequence
Kult material
and more.

Bovine Cranium Productions - Feel the Skull

Inner Voice
Vol. 1 Issue 1 (revised June 7, 2005)
Jan. 2004

Table of Contents

- 1 - Cover image by John Nixon aka PeterAmthor
- 3 - Introduction by PeterAmthor
- 4 - Waterways of Metropolis for KULT by PeterAmthor
- 7 - The End Second Edition review by Black Dog
- 11 - Story out of Sequence part one by PeterAmthor
- 13 - Preacher by Odin
- 20 - 812 Succubus by Max Hattuer
- 23 - All at once by Derek Stoelting
- 31 - Links of note and Notes at the End

Inner Voice Contact info via the web and ordinary mail service

peteramthor@trulyrural.com
Please put "Inner Voice" in the subject line.

John Nixon
PO Box 114
Potosi MO 63664

For submission guidelines please check out the Truly Rural website.

<http://www.trulyrural.com/>

All submissions remain the property of the writer or artist. Inner Voice claims no ownership over any of the material submitted to us.

Welcome to the first issue of Inner Voice.

I will keep this introduction to Inner Voice short and sweet, or at least I will attempt to. This ezine is set up as a sideline hobby; there are no deadlines, no costs and no pressure. Also there is no pay and there are no promises. The next issue will come out whenever it's ready and complete, not a moment sooner. Layout will be kept simple if I am doing that issue, everything will be kept pretty straight up and honest. That's the basics, got it?

So what exactly is this whole thing going to be about? It's going to be about lots of different things of a great and varied content. It will be covering movies, comics, games, fiction and whatever else comes to mind. What it's to be about is going to be up to you also. Whatever people send in will be in here along with whatever I have written up lately. It's going to be more geared towards supplying an outlet for creative people than anything else.

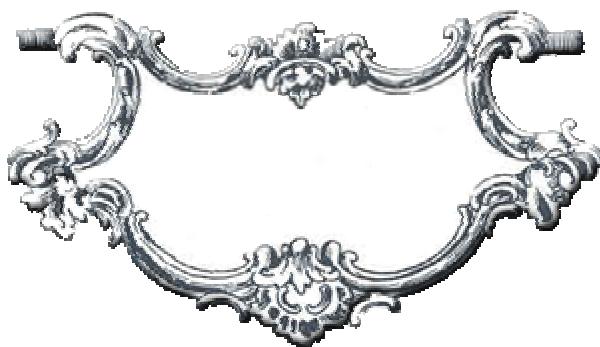
Now if you want to submit something here are the guidelines. No pdf's, it's got to be works or word compatible, it must be your own original material and please be creative. Also if someone wants to volunteer and edit an issue to give it a good look or something along those lines let me know we will see what can be worked out.

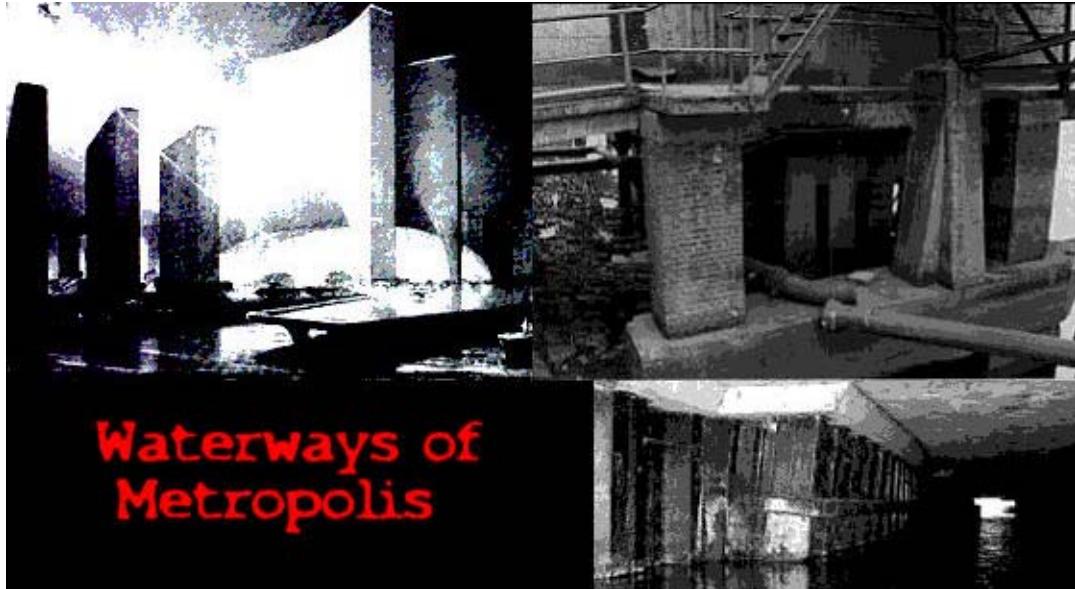
Any and all feedback is welcome here. Drop an email to the address provided on page 2 and be sure to put "Inner Voice Feedback" in the subject line. We will take a look at everything that is sent to us and listen to advice from those who are downloading this ezine. Hopefully in future issues we will be able to put a letters page in here as well.

There are no concerns with making this looking sleek and professional. This is mainly because this is not anywhere near being a professional publication by any means. So please keep this in mind when looking through the articles.

So with that out of the way lets see what we have in our first issue.

Enjoy,
PeterAmthor





Waterways of Metropolis

By Peter Amthor

Introduction

Rodger sat on the edge of the docks staring into the water. Its rainbow shine created by the mixture of petroleum and chemical waste. Hypodermic needles, garbage bags, browned Styrofoam and empty beer cans slosh together directly below him. Oils had stained the wooden pillars black and coated them in thick layers. Of course the smell of all of these wastes mixed together was something that was beyond description. But night after night he sat here staring off into nothingness and enjoying the only peace he was allowed.

Here he has seen ships that are beyond imagination slowly sail into the harbor. At a distance they appear as great monstrosities, twisted and evil. As the hulks come closer through the hanging smog they become more tangible, more normal. The Spikes along the sides seem to fade away, along with the bodies hanging from their sides. The crew doesn't shamble along hunchbacked they start walking normal and move like everybody else. The colors shift from blotted reds and greens to the typical grays and blues.

They look normal to everyone else but he knows the truth of what they really look like. He told a few people but stopped when the only response he got was to be laughed at. Then a couple cops started asking him questions about it so he clamed up with a quickness to avoid that kind of attention. No one else will come out here with him and watch and no one will believe what he says. So he just keeps watching, and with pencil and hand writes down everything he sees in ragged notebook he carries with him. One day he will find someone who will believe him and they will come and see for themselves. See the dark ships from the other side.

The importance of waterways in our society is overwhelming. We could not function properly as a trade-based civilization without them. Peoples entire lives revolve around them, the business they create, the maintenance needed to keep them usable and the events that occur there. Therefore it seems only plausible that a network of canals, small lakes and docks would exist in Metropolis. These waterways would connect various sections of the great city to each other, with massive bridges, tunnels that run for miles, dark water going vessels that belch black smog and a host of new creatures to haunt the lengths of them.

Although I understand that many people do not like the idea of having such things in Metropolis some do. Therefore if you do not agree with this information presented, don't use it, none of this is cannon or official, it's simple one persons view.

In this series of articles will be details of some of the more important areas of the waterways that are located in various places in Metropolis, such as the Falls. Also it will contain expansion material for some of the area already existing and how they use them to their advantage. A section with ideas for adventure seeds that take place on the waterways and ways that one could accidentally find themselves in Metropolis on them.

The Barges of Machine City

The ever-working denizens of The Machine City have put their own abilities to work on creating machines to sail the rivers and waterways of Metropolis. These massive boats of rust darkened metal push their way along driven by paddle wheel like devices built on their sides. Kept running by captor slaves and half human cybernetically enhanced monstrosities.

The barges usually have the appearance of something out of inferno. The paddle wheels are huge and bladed; this is mainly for destroying any debris that happens to get pulled into the wheel. Barbed fencing stretches around the craft and sometimes it runs across the decks sectioning the ship off. Areas for slave oarsmen run along the side just below the top deck, any unfortunate who is captured is put to providing extra propulsion for the ship. Along the front are several towers each with a windmill like device at its top. These are used to create extra energy to power the crafts engines; occasionally a bolt of excess power is let loose sometimes striking the deck of the ship itself.

These barges commonly carry around 10-20 techrone guards, several worker techrones and several slaved humans along the oarsmen area. The objective of the barges is to find new sources of raw material, carry worker teams to other sections of the city, or to set up new factories in abandoned parts of Metropolis. There are many machines along the center deck that resemble loaders, dump trucks and other such vehicles, and underneath them are empty cargo bays to carry back the materials gathered. Along the sides of the top deck are several restraints bolted down, these are used for transportation of any extra slaves they are delivering or pick up along the way. The ships used for setting up new

factories carry an extra 20 or so worker techrones and several construction machines for building the factory. These factories are used to process materials in the surrounding area to send back to the Main factory for use. Anyone or thing unfortunate enough to be caught in the area is put to work in the factory, once they die from this enslavement their bodies are thrown into the machines to provide a 'grease' for the engines.

The Docks

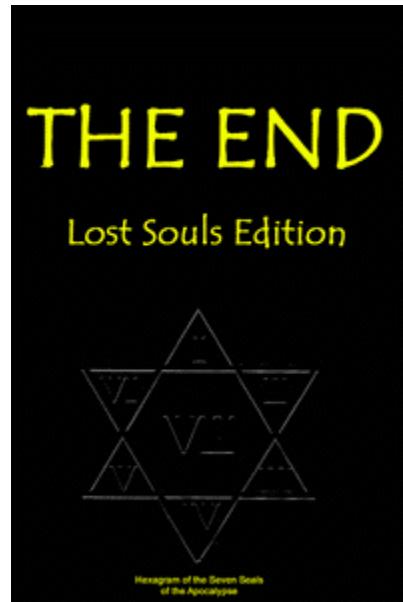
The docks used in Metropolis are not very numerable and therefore compressed and congested into extremely contained areas. These resemble any bay area that has a problem with high pollution, extremely heavy traffic and the inability to spread out any further. Everything from junks out of the Hong Kong harbors to mainline military battleships may be seen in these areas. The water gives off a rainbow effect when light is shined upon it due the presence of fuels and other such pollutants, this has caused some harbor areas to suddenly burst into flames and be completely consumed within minutes.

The harbor edges are rife with wooden shacks, innumerable power line crossings, darkened warehouses and shipping equipment such as forklifts and cranes. Some parts actually cross over back into the illusion may offer 'escape' back into the illusion. Seaside brothels that cater to sea faring men that feature rape, massive orgies and other such acts often crossover, as do some warehouses due the acts that are carried out inside them. There always seem to be dockworkers working endlessly throughout the docks, most of them have dead stares and are forever trapped in motions of repetition, others are those who have crossed into Metropolis and are attempting not to be found by its denizens.

Fuel depots are very common in these areas as well. Massive tanks of fuel stand tall among the twists of pipe of catwalks that surround them. The air is almost unbreathable due to the overwhelming amount of vapors that are created by leaks and spills.

Next installments of The Waterways of Metropolis will include: The Falls, Cracks in the Illusion, Incidents on the waterways, Creatures of the depths and more.

Kult is a horror roleplaying game set in contemporary time. Currently, 7th Circle holds the licensed rights to publish Kult material. Paradox Entertainment holds the copyright for Kult.



Black Dog's Game/Book Review *The End Lost Souls Edition*, Copyright 2002, Tyranny Games, www.tyrannygames.com

Whoa-boy. Here's one for the Bible thumpers; it starts out stirring things up. The book, with its gold print and black exterior, looks rather like a classic Protestant Bible in design style, with a "Hexagram of the Seven Seals of the Apocalypse" on the front. Just about guaranteed to get some looks, and get some folks kicked out of their mom's basement. Well known for its role as "the first post-apocalypse role-playing game based on the Book of Revelation," the game received critical acclaim for its bleak setting and creative background material. The End also received substantial attention [all press is good press, ya neh?] due to Gen Con's decision to *ban its initial sale* at the convention. There's a sure attention getter.

WARNING/DISCLAIMER: This Game is not for those who have an extreme sensitivity to religion, or whose religious views aren't open for examination. IT IS ONLY A GAME, NOT A STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE, PROPHECY, WHATEVER. If it helps, think of it as a parallel universe, or whatever works. It does say, "Mature Readers Only" on the back cover, but I know some level-headed, relatively sane folks who would refuse to play because of the subject matter.

Overview: *The End* is the classic End-of-the-World story with a twist. When reading it, I was reminded of an old Steve Martin stand up routine:

"What if you died, and then found yourself standing in line at the Pearly Gates, and it was just like they said, with Saint Peter, the Pearly Gates, a big Book of Life, and everything? Wouldn't you feel stupid? *[To self]* Aw, man... in college they said this was all bullshit."

The End takes the predicted doom in the Book of Revelations a la the King James Version of the Bible, fine tunes it a bit for playability, and thrusts characters off in the middle of the post-Tribulation era. They blame the differences between the Revelations in their book and the Bible as tampering by monks in the Middle Ages. A nice out, it does make the game book itself the definitive source book for the game, and not every text the PCs can scrounge. One can just imagine if they had not;

“Where are you going, John?”

“Gaming over at Black Dog's.”

“Hey, those aren't game books; that's Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, the Greek-English Concordance, and the Interlinear Four Translations New Testament.”

“They're gaming books now, Bucko.”

Of course, each Judge [as the Gamemaster is called in The End] is free to pick and choose which scriptures he or she would like to allow.

The End uses the much-maligned D20 system, and I won't use this review to list my complaints about those particular game mechanics. The book is written in such a format that if one has a system with which one is comfortable, one can adopt-adapt-improve anything one likes from it, if the scenario/setting appeals. Those who have gamed with me and/or my crowd know what thieves we are; I would most likely steal the setting and scenario, and just use my game mechanics.

Setting: This is grim stuff, Intrepid Adventurers. The Player Characters [PCs] have been denied entrance into Heaven or Hell, and are doomed to live out their days on an Earth abandoned by God. Non-Player Characters [NPCs] range from children, folks just like the PCs, warlords, slavers, doctors, Indian chiefs, ad infinitum.

The world itself is “reverting to Eden;” anything man-made is rapidly decaying, except items that are in use. This effect is called “the End of the World Blues,” or simply the Blues. An example given in the book is that of two houses side-by-side. The one with people living in it seems pretty much as it did before The End, just a bit run down. The empty will probably collapse in weeks, and be dust in months.

Whole regions of North America have reverted to the wild, and savage beasts have lost their fear of man. All in all, the setting is pretty grim. “It is a beautiful and terrifying place.”

The Breakdown: Below follows a chapter breakdown, with a bit of data as appropriate.

Table of Contents: Quite useful, and it actually makes sense. I thought naming the Chapters after books in the Bible was a nice touch, as well as the parchment-like yellowed paper. Reading this book when alone can be creepy.

Chapter 1: Book of Chronicles. Storytelling and background, gives the reader a feel of the setting through the experiences of an NPC. Well written, it ends with a cliff hanger that leaves the reader wanting more, exactly as an intro should.

Chapter 2: Book of Revelation. “What the Hell happened,” step-by-step. Some FAQ, and a slang list for setting the mood. This is the stuff that will cause the local religious expert [and every group I know has one, even if it’s only me] to say, “Huh-uh, it ain’t gonna happen like that; Reverend Louderhell said it would...” It’s a game setting. Get over it.

Chapter 3: Book of Kings. A listing of the current human settlements, called colonies, that exist in the basic game. There is sufficient detail to get the ball rolling, with plenty of gray areas. If one’s group has PCs that like to snag the book and read it, it won’t avail them much. Big chunks of the setting/situation are left to the individual judge, with only thumbnail sketches of NPCs, weaponry, etceteras. I always retain the right to slam PCs for playing on knowledge their Character should not have, but the book avoids this conflict by not going into too much detail.

Chapter 4: Book of Genesis. Character Generation. Those familiar with the D20 system will find little new here, with two exceptions.

1. There is a new stat called Ennui, and if it builds too high, bad things happen to the character. It is caused by loneliness, essentially [the book explains it better]. Some PCs might gripe about this [I would], but I think it’s a nifty way to herd them together without the over-used “Y’all meet in a tavern, and this mage is hiring for a quest...” It also pushes characters to seek out colonies and human company, which can drive a scenario by itself for a bit.

2. Characters are not heroic. On purpose. The quote from the back is “The Meek have inherited the Earth... poor bastards.” By “Meek,” these are the folks that chose neither Heaven nor Hell; they are neither classic good guys nor bad guys. As the game points out, anyone who felt strongly on the G vs. E issue was probably called away before the scenario starts. Characters will be mediocre, in skills and worldview, until their experiences allow them to develop otherwise. The game does point out that few people easy to kill are probably around anymore.

Chapter 5: Book of Acts. Skills and Feats are as per the D20 system. Yawn.

Chapter 6: Book of Lamentations. This chapter lists scenario/setting specific “magic,” and things particular to The End one might not find in other D20 stuff. There are some interesting variations on magic here. The magic breaks down into Shamanistic Magic and Word of God magic, both of which are pretty impressive, especially as it seems the rest of the world is pretty well “mundane” [there aren’t a bunch of elves and such hopping about]. I found the magic system interesting, and delightfully limiting. The Judge won’t have to worry about different types of magic-users in the party.

Ennui is explained in detail, and its effects are listed, some of which could be dangerous to the party, not just the individual. The “Diseases of the End” are also listed, which makes for some cheerful reading. This is followed up with Denizens of the End, a list of all the nasty critters which exist to torment PCs.

Chapter 7: Book of Numbers. As in, “Your number’s up, Pal.” The rules of combat. This game’s take on combat is almost as dangerous as the whiners claim my

system is. With a d4 for hit points, and the wimpiest handgun in the game doing a d6+1, characters can check out with a quickness. This game does have a lovely lethality to it.

NOTE: The game, in a point of wonderful ambiguity, leaves open what happens when you die. Most folks think Heaven and Hell are closed forever, and if they die, they just cease to be.

It's scary in the dark, isn't it?

Chapter 8: Book of Judges. Remember, the Gamemaster in The End is referred to as the Judge. This is a basic "How to GM" chapter, with lots of nifty ideas that the experienced players probably know already, but I recommend reading it anyway, at least once as a refresher. I particularly like the Ultimate Rule on page 271. Another of my favorite entries is "Simply do not let the characters know exactly what is out there, and let them begin to fear."

The "Introduction" section of Judges details how to prepare the PC for the game, through Judge guidance, giving each PC a feel for what's going on and going to go on.

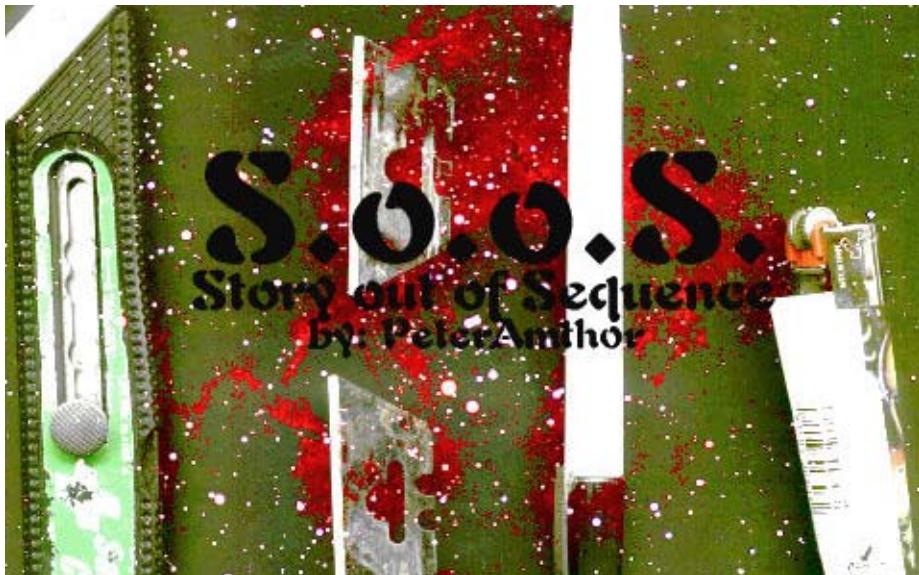
Chapter 9: Book of Apocrypha. A Rogues' Gallery of NPCs to scare the bejesus out of the PCs, and maybe occasionally aid them, they are presented in character sheet format. The last of the book contains photocopy-able character sheets.

Index: In case one can't find something thru the Table of Contents, the Index in the back of the book is quite handy. There is also an index to the book's art, and ads in the very back for upcoming supplements.

Rating: Using the 1 [worst] to 10 [best] scale, I give The End, Lost Souls Edition an 8. I might have rated it higher, but some of the artwork left a bit to be desired, particularly for a reprint where they could have fixed some things. I tried to be objective, but it may have lost .5 or so due to my distaste with the D20 system. GMs who like that system may rate it higher.

I do like the concept and setting, and yes, I admit it, the brutality of the Game. It read well, there were few typos, and in the ultimate litmus test, I found myself wanting to run the scenario when I finished reading it.

Your mileage may vary.



**Story out of Sequence
Part One
“Breakdown”
By PeterAmthor**

Roscoe sat crouched down on his knees with his back resting against the brick. The cold felt reassuring against his spine. He could feel the sun beating down on him, especially on his head and face. The red glow inside his closed eyelids was even bright to him; all he wanted was the darkness. Only the cold metal in his hands gave him any other comfort besides the bricks at his back.

The sounds of the city around him beat in on the eardrums giving no silence for those who wanted it. The never ceasing dull hum of engines set the average that everything seemed to challenge. Horns blared loudly like spikes through the skin without notice. Screams of insults and foul language would often erupt, usually after the sounds of smashing metal and breaking glass. That would bring those terrible sirens of the local law enforcement that would add in more raised voices and insults. It was all an unending circle of noise and aggravation. It never ceased and it continued to drive itself further into his head every day.

“Still crying about the sounds?” the voice in his head finally rang out.

“Go away. I don’t want to hear you today.” Roscoe said out loud. Becoming suddenly aware that he was doing so. He calmed in a second when he realized that there was no one else on the rooftop to hear him. “You give me a headache.”

“I give you a headache? No, what gives you a headache is yourself listening to all the sounds of life out there. You focus on them instead of ignoring them or trying to get them to be quite.”

"You make me listen to them. I know it. I never used to be this way until you came along. Now all I hear is every little noise around me no matter what I do to drown them out."

"Oh I did this did I? Maybe you're just having your midlife crisis or something. Did you even think about that? Or are you just looking for someone to place the blame on?"

"You ask too many questions. Shut up."

"Shut up? Me? What have I done to you?"

"Shut up."

"I will not. I have a right to speak just as you do. It's not my fault that you're the only person who can hear me." In the distance the sound of car alarm rings out.

"Shut up!"

"You only think of yourself you know that? Have you ever thought of anyone beside yourself? Are you listening to me?" In the apartment building across the street the sound of a child screaming suddenly blares out.

"Shut up!" Roscoe stands straight up. He opens his eyes to the pain of the light in defiance. A car backfires. "Shut up!" He spins to face down onto the street. An argument starts between several teenagers over a game of basketball. "SHUT UP!" He clicks the safety off, and raises the rifle. The noise being added now is being created by him. Every part of the sound is audible, the inner workings of the firearm, the round firing, the ejection of the empty shell casing, the brass hitting the rooftop, the screams from below. "I said Shut Up!"

"No."

The Preacher

By Odin

Seth Daniels watched as Deputy O'Conner rounded the corner by Greer's General Store and walked down the boardwalk along Main Street. He slid farther back in the shadows of the alley he was in hiding in when O'Conner stopped and rolled a cigarette, surveying the street as he did so. Striking a match on the nearest post he seemed content with what he saw turned and disappeared down the side street near the livery. Seth stayed glued to his hiding spot for an eternity. Feeling that no one would see him he trotted across the street and up onto the porch of the Buffalo Skull Saloon. He exhaled and turned around to look at the street once more. Standing behind one of the thick posts, he stared at one end of the street then the other. Nothing. The street was empty. The only noise was the saloon behind him, and it sounded like it was really jumping. He grinned; clutching the leather sack he had been carrying both hands. He laughed, thinking he was being to paranoid about his latest pickup. He had stolen plenty of things in his life that was his job. People paid him to acquire things for them that normally could not be bought. His latest employer was John Burton, a rich cattleman and halfass politician.

Burton was a man that had his hand in everything that happened around this town. Some said that if Burton left there would be no Spirit, Arizona, the town would just dry up. Burton was behind most of the businesses; he had the Town Marshall and the local Sheriff in his pocket. And he loved antiques. That was where Seth came in. He had acquired several pieces for Burton, just this latest acquisition made him nervous due to its origin of pickup. Burton did not care how Seth got the articles, just that he wanted them. Seth thought Burton maybe getting to big for his boots, walking around Spirit with his private army in tow. He had the territorial government in his pocket and figured he could do anything. He had shot a man in the street on day in front of a crowd of people just because he wanted the man's wife. He just killed the man, took his wife by force and kicked her to the curb a month later when he was tired of her. She was later found on the outskirts of town by the old cemetery where her husband was buried. She had cut her wrists. The Undertaker said she had a peaceful smile on her face in death.

Seth remembered when Burton had summoned him to his house. He sat across the table from Burton in the immense house that Burton lived in. Table and chairs were from Germany Burtons said. Burton raved and wandered about his furniture and belongings as usual. Seth had grown use to this and would act like he was listening, while he made eyes at the Mexican maid who would grin back. When Burton got down to explaining what he wanted Seth to acquire he nearly fell out of his chair. Burton picked up immediately on Seth's actions and added he would make it worth his while. Burton had Seth's full attention now. When the negotiations were done, both men were happy. Burton would have what he wanted and Seth would have a small house in town Burton owned, seven hundred dollars and the Mexican maid. It was evident to Seth Burton really wanted this object, and that was all right with him.

Now Seth was standing in front of the Buffalo Skull, item in hand. He realized he was being stupid for being so nervous and paranoid about this job and walked into the swinging stained glass doors of the saloon. He could tell it was Saturday night because the Skull was packed. Jay Thomes, the piano player, was hammering away at the old piano in the back, the saloon girls were laughing, hollering and showing lots of skin, and the mishmash of cowboys, half-breeds and farmers all looked like they were having a good time. Seth strode in grinning and waving to those he knew, ordered a bottle and a glass and took a table by one of the front windows. He poured him a drink and stared out the window anticipating Burton's arrival.

A lifetime seemed to pass. Seth was well on his way to a good drunk and getting a little impatient. But he knew Burton was the boss and Burton did things on his own time. He smirked and figured if he had Burton's money everyone could kiss his ass to. He glanced at the grandfather clock behind the big oak bar.

"Eleven forty-five. Wonder where in the hell he is?" He mumbled and downed a shooter of whiskey. At that time Burton and his boys came walking thru the doors of the saloon.

"Mr. Daniels, how are you?" Burton took a seat at the table as his hired guns milled about the room. Burton was smiling and had a smell like he had been at the opium den down in the Chinese part of town.

"Just fine John. It seems your doing fine this evening. Out making your rounds?" Seth smiled and poured Burton a drink in the glass he had been using and took a pull off of the bottle.

"Oh, I'm doing just fine. Were you able to acquire the merchandise I requested? I hope so. Hell I know you did, you're the best right." Burton swallowed the whiskey and slammed the glass upside down on the table.

"Right here in the bag, sir. There was a small problem but it was taken care of. I got the piece you requested and picked up some other things that I thought might interest you. We can settle on those later if you like them."

Burton looked at Seth staring into his eyes," What kind of problems? Anyway of tracking this back to me? We couldn't have that Seth; it just wouldn't be good for either of us." Burton was being very serious.

"I said I took care of that John. No reason to get upset or worried. Just a small problem and it was taken care of." Seth stared back at Burton to get his point across.
"There was a priest there but he was taken care of."

"What do you mean there was a priest there? And what the hell do you mean 'taken' care of? You couldn't wait for everyone to be gone and then sneak in? What exactly happened, Seth?" Burton had a look in his eyes that Seth had never seen, he was scared.

"I did wait. But when I was taking the articles someone said my name."

"Said your name. As in your real name?"

"Take it easy John, calm down. Yes, my name. Remember the priest from the Catholic Church here in Spirit that left a few months back, Father Timmons. Well it was him. I don't know where he came from or what he was doing there, but he seen what I

was doing and knew me by name.” Seth calmly took a pull off of the whiskey bottle on the table and looked at Burton.

“Holy Shit. Seth tell me you didn’t kill him.” Burton was stammering.

“Sure did. Split his head with an iron candle opera.” Seth was grinning at Burton, “What the hell John. You killed men. You’ve had men killed. It’s no big deal.”

“He was a priest god damn it! I ain’t never killed a priest. There’s a line Seth. You can’t cross it. Are you listening?”

“Hell with the line. Job’s done, it’s past. Now we go on. So cheer up, you’re getting what you wanted.” Seth took another pull,” Besides, I did it, you didn’t. I have to worry about it, don’t I?”

“You’re right. It’s over, let’s move on. Goddamn Seth, my boys get wind of this you’ll probably scare the hell out of them.” Burton was grinning again. “Hell with it.”

The clock tower in the center of town struck the first chime of midnight and the scream of a horse drowned out the piano in the saloon.

“What the hell was that!” Burton had jumped at the sound and was looking out the window.

The clock was counting out the chimes of midnight as Burton and Seth noticed a rider coming down from the North end of town. It was too dark to know who the rider was, but both men sat watching.

The rider’s horse kept a slow steady walk down the street till it reached the front of the Buffalo Skull. The horses tied outside jerked at their reins. Those tied loosely pulled away and ran down the street. A dog from outside came running under the door, tail between its legs and to the back of the saloon. The saloon had grown hauntingly silent by this time, like a witches spell had been cast on the town. The horse and rider were just standing there motionless in the middle of the street with the wind blowing around them. Then the rider turned his head to look at Burton and Seth through the window. They could feel the stare; it was like an icy vein of water running down their backs. Seth thought of something the priest had said to him while he was dying.

“I pray for you my son. For he will have his vengeance. You have been led astray and there is only one way for him to bring you back to the path. I pray for you Seth. I am sorry for you.”

Seth jumped up and began looking for a way out. “Oh shit! Oh shit! John you have to get me out of here! Please John, get me out of here!” Seth was so scared he was almost crying.

"Calm down boy! Don't you worry we got plenty of boys here to deal with this cowboy. God damn, get a hold of yourself!" Burton was attempting to sound like he was still in control but Seth could see the fear in him. "Dillian, Cody, Burke! Get your asses outside and deal with this bastard!"

"Yes sir, Mr. Burton!" Three of the hired guns ran out the door.

Seth looked out the window. The rider was dismounting, still staring at him thru the window of the Buffalo Skull. Seth was starting to calm down with Burton's men going outside to deal with this man.

Burton had several men here with him and if trouble started the Town Marshall would soon be involved once he heard the noise.

Billy Burke gained the street with Dillian and Cody. The three of them faced the rider, blocking the saloon entrance steps. The three of them had rode with different outlaws gangs at one time till they came into the hire of John Burton. They were no strangers to drawing leather, and had no problems with killing a man. especially one they didn't know.

"What business you got here!" Jake Dillian barked out at the rider who was staring into the window still.

There was a wheezing gasp, "I have business inside. Step out of my way." The voice was plain and dull.

"Don't think so. You need to get back on that nag and get your ass out of this town. We ain't asking either, we're telling you to." Dillian punctuated the statement by spitting on the ground.

The rider turned to face the three guns blocking his path. There was another wheeze, "I don't think so."

Billy Burke spoke up, "You dumb sumbitch. You're not going into the saloon; you're leaving town or going to Boothill. Your choice." Burke smiled and placed his hand his pistol. "I'm hoping you choose badly."

The other men began laughing. Then the froze as the stranger answered Billy's question.

"Draw."

Dillian nearly swallowed the plug of tobacco in his jaw, "What?"

Wheeze, "Draw you bastards."

All men except Burke drew their weapons. Half a dozen shots rang out threw the streets of Spirit. Dillian fell to his knees clutching his chest; blood running threw the

fingers of his left hand, his pistol falling from the right. Dean Cody stood there in the street for a few seconds then his pistol fell to the ground. Then his body slowly fell backwards onto the steps of the Buffalo Skull, a neat hole in his left jaw. Burke had not drawn his weapon; he was standing with his hands up. He had seen dust fly from the stranger's long coat when the gunfire started and the stranger had not even flinched.

"Wait a minute, mister! Wait! Go on in! Don't shoot me!" Burke was pissing his pants. "I ain't gonna draw! Look see, I give up!"

Wheeze, "I said draw you little bastard." The stranger reached around and grabbed the double-barreled stagecoach gun from his saddle and leveled it on Burke just as he ran in front of the window of the saloon. He touched both barrels off.

When the eruption of gunfire started outside, people had begun scrambling inside the Buffalo Skull. People ran out the back, got under tables, ran up the stairs, some even jumped behind the bar. What was left of Burton's men surrounded him and Seth in the middle of the room, guns drawn. Seth had given the bag of goods to Burton. Everything seemed like it was going to turn out all right, till the front window erupted from Burkes body flying threw it, sending glass in every direction. One of the saloon girls let out a scream in the back. Burkes body came sliding to a stop five feet from the space occupied by Burton, Seth and the gunmen. Burton looked down at the bloody mess that was Burke. Burke raised up his hand towards Burton.

"Run." He half whispered and died.

The sound of spurs then of boots on the wooden walkway outside. Burton's men drew up their weapons and began firing at the door. People covered their heads as wood splinters went flying along with the stained glass of the saloon doors. Burton's men stopped and began to reload their weapons. That was when the stranger walked into the saloon and all hell broke loose.

The rider still had the coach gun and quickly emptied both barrels into the men at the front of the protective circle, he then slung it away hard hitting a man who had stood up from behind a table with his pistol drawn in the face. One of Burton's men who had been shot fell backwards onto Seth knocking him down. The other was on one knee attempting to gain his feet. He was shot again by the rider who had drawn his pistols while he advanced forward toward the group. Burton had dove to the ground and was attempting to crawl away from the fight. Seth was crawling the other direction towards the bar. Two more shots and another of Burtons men hit the floor, his head blown open. What was left of Burtons men had reloaded by this time and were returning fire.

Seth had reached the corner of the bar and turned to look where the gunfight was going. He could see dust flying of off the stranger but that was the only effect that Burton's men were having. By this time the stranger had closed the gap and was in the middle of Burton's men. He stuck a pistol in the belly of one and pulled the trigger as he struck one upside the head with his pistol, sending the man sprawling. He hit another

with his elbow stunning him as he grabbed him by the scruff of his jacket and tossing him over the bar and into the huge mirror that adorned the wall, shattering it into thousands of pieces. Turning the stranger faced the next man who lunged at him with a bowie knife. The stranger dodged the thrust and grabbed him by the wrist, bringing up his other hand striking the knife fighter at his elbow and bending his arm down, breaking it. The man screamed as the stranger slid the knife clear of the attackers hand into his own and then striking him in the throat with it. He then stabbed the man behind him in the stomach, spinning and cutting the left side of the mans throat.

The victim grabbed at his throat but could not stop the spray of blood each time his heart beat. The stranger grabbed a chair and threw it. The chair burst across Burtons back and neck and sent him down stopping his escape attempt. The man that took the pistol to the head was attempting to gain his feet when the stranger reached down with both hands and wrenched his neck. There was a loud cracking sound and the man lay still. Then the stranger turned and looked at Seth.

Seth started a mad scramble behind the bar as the rider stepped his way. He was grabbed by the ankle and drug backward. The stranger jerked him upright as Seth pulled his revolver.

It was simply slapped out of his hands. The stranger grabbed him by the front of his shirt and jerked Seth up and over his head and down back first onto a table, which exploded into pieces from the impact. Seth then blacked out.

“You desert rat! Do you know who I am! You are a dead man, you hear me! Untie me!” Burton was screaming.

Burtons bellowing had awoken Seth and he was looking around groggily. He was sitting in a chair with his hands tied in front of him. He a bloody nose that probably happened when he went threw the table. There was no one in the bar now except him, Burton and the stranger. It was now that he had a good look at the stranger who was leaning against the bar.

The man was tall and lean. He was dressed in all black. His hat dipped low over his face, covering most of it with shadow. He wore a dusty long rider’s coat, which was a favorite of most of the crowd he ran with. Seth looked close at the mans neck. It had the scar of a man that had been hung, and what was below that scared him even worse. It was a preacher’s collar. Around the mans waist was a gunfighters rig that had two Colts hanging in it. The coach gun was sitting on the bar. His skin was a grayish white color and his skin was drawn tight across his face, almost making it look like he was smiling. His eyes had an eerie glow to them that made them look green. The silver spurs then caught Seth’s eyes. The straps had crosses going around them. He then knew what this was all about, it was what the priest warned him about..

The Stranger locked eyes with Seth, “Where is it?” There was a wheezing sound as the man talked.

“Don’t you say a damn thing, Seth. To hell with this bastard. He doesn’t know what he has gotten into. You don’t cross John Samuel Bur.”

The stranger shooting him in the head cut Burton short. The stranger calmly looked back at Seth while placing the Colt back into its holster. Seth couldn’t believe what had just happened.

Wheeze, “Where is it?”

“Over there in that leather bag. The one by the piano.” Seth was in full panic.

The stranger walked over to the bag and picked it up. He reached inside and retrieved a golden cross encrusted with jewels. The cross was examined and placed back into the bag.

“You got the cross back; now I can go right?”

The stranger walked over to Seth and jerked him to his feet by grabbing the ropes that bound them. He shoved Seth towards the front door, picking up his coach gun as they walked by. When they reached the walk outside he shoved Seth causing him to fall down the steps and into the dirt street landing on his faced. When the stranger reached where Seth had fallen and jerked him to his feet again and walked him to where his horse was standing.

“Why can’t you just let me go? You have the cross. Let me go.” Seth pleaded.

The stranger tied a length of rope to Seth’s hands and then to his saddle. “You have to go with me to return the cross, Seth Daniels.” The stranger then mounted his horse.

“Oh please, mercy. Please have mercy. Oh God.” Seth was crying.

The rider turned and looked down at Seth, “God has mercy. Some of his angels do not.” The stranger then put the spurs to the horse. The horse took off like a shot running as fast as it could.

The people say that sometimes at night in Spirit, when everything is quiet and resting. You can still hear Seth Daniels screaming like he was the night he left town.

The 812 Succubus

For Sla Industries

By Max Hattuer

"Karma is happy to introduce the first female stormer, the 812 Succubus. Originally, the 812 was used as in covert operations against the Skin Trade, due to the success involved, and the want of Operative status by the Stormers involved, SLA Industries has declassified their existence and granted them the option to become freelance operatives. We hope that the World of Progress will also see their talents and abilities as useful and helpful."



-Harold J. Donavon, Karma PR representative, speaking to the public in a recent program from Third Eye News, July 903.

Quote: "I may be the weakest of all the previous models, but I make up for it in intelligence, charm and the ability to blend in with all of the other races. We have been around since 900 and nobody ever even knew we existed..."

Insight: You were made to combat the Skin Trade, with the success of your previous sisters, SLA has decided to allow you to move freely in society as an operative. Using the natural abilities that you have been given, you move easily into a squad. Although you don't understand why they refuse so many undercover BPN's, you handle it with all the grace and charm that you have. You have been constantly asked to be a model, but the excitement of working as an operative has always been the first thing in your mind. You are better than the other Stormers. You are physically appealing to others, charming, and beautiful, and you can influence people in ways that the other Stormers can only dream. It is how you got into the squad, and it is how you will operate if you need to. After all, it is fun, and men seem to turn to putty in your hands with just a wink and a blown kiss.

Background: For years Karma have experimented with female stormer variants, and once again, the technicians at Phantom Pregnancy have outdone themselves. Not only is the 812 Succubus a perfect specimen of the Human female, it is also quite charming. After only a few minutes in the presence of one of these models, you quickly forget that

it's a Stormer. The flexibility that this creates is enhanced by the fact that they have been around since 900SD, working undercover against the Skin Trade, and even DarkNight operatives have fallen for them. One DN agent even married one.

I have been informed that the charming personality comes not just from a natural affinity, but also from a highly concentrated pheromone that these Stormers excrete. And although physically inferior to even Humans and Ebons, they make up for it in very clever ways. And many of them are quite accomplished at Martial Arts.

Appearance: The 812 Succubus is in all aspects the epitome of the beautiful Human female.

Interaction:

Humans: "I love Humans, they are so easy to control, I mean, talk to..."

Frothers: "Hanging out with Frothers guarantees a good time. They really know how to party, although working with them usually gets you in trouble if you are not careful."

Ebons: "Ebons have a problem with being too uppity and unyielding, although as emotional as they are it is surprising how easily they are influenced."

Brain Wasters: "Haughty bastards with no inkling of the finer points of Etiquette, and virtually charmless. 'Big throbbing vein indeed,' that is no way to talk to a woman. Especially one that carries a Blitzer."

Shaktars: "I'm really at a loss on them, I don't understand them in the least. But I trust them more than anyone else."

Wraith Raiders: "Cool fur, it feels really neat. Easily manipulated once you get the hang of what they like."

313 Malice: "Ahh, big brothers, all of them. One or two of them around and it actually gets kinda hard to talk to people in a quiet, calm way."

711 Xeno: "Wish I could do that whole 'colour-thing,' it's really awesome!"

714 Chagrin: "A bit overprotective if you ask me, okay, at least when it comes to 'little ol' me.'"

Vevaphon: "Weird, definitely weird."

Base Skills: Martial Arts (DEX) Rank 1, Persuasion (CHA) Rank 2, Bribery (CHA) Rank 1, Seduction (CHA) Rank 2, SLA Info (KNOW) Rank 1, Rival Company Info (KNOW) Rank 1

Pheromone Excretion:

The Succubus constantly excretes a highly concentrated form of pheromones through the pores in its body, gaining the ability to 'charm' other races. A CONC save at -5 applies to all CHA-based skill rolls in which the victim has been in the presence of the Stormer for more than 5 minutes. Modifiers should be applied dependant on the situation and current emotions of the victim.

The ability CANNOT be used if the Succubus is wearing a fully-enclosed suit of armour. And the Stormer MUST be within 3m or the time it takes doubles out to 5m, and is ineffective at longer ranges. Time is halved if the Stormer is touching the victim, and the penalty doubles if 'sexual' contact is made, i.e. kissing, pressing, etc.

Extremely Charismatic:

Because of the 812's programming, she will always receive a +5 bonus to CHA-based skills. This is cumulative with the Pheromone Excretion abilities when appropriate.

Minimum/Maximum Characteristics:

STR DEX DIA CONC CHA COOL

1-6 1-10 1-11 1-10 5-15 1-10

Yes, they are sterile...

Sla Industries is property of Cubicle 7 Entertainment.

ALL AT ONCE
Sla Industries fiction
By Derek Stoelting

:-: part one :-:

It didn't start the way I thought it would.

Instead, it happened all at once.

Or so it seemed...

* * * * *

"Damn it, Roddy! What the hell do you think you're doing this time?"

"Hey, you said that you needed help converting your computer over, so I thought I would help you out."

"Right, but that doesn't mean you can just open up my comp' without me around and start going through it!"

A smile breaks Rodriguez's face. "Why, what's in it?"

"Nothing," clams up the human.

"Right, well, I've just about got the upgrade done. You should be able to run you're hacking matrices at a much higher rate, now."

"Okay, thanks." Mia turns and walks out of the room.

G'nd'r picks up his ringing phone. "What?" the Shaktar asks.

"Oh, okay. Terling, the worthless one wants to talk to you." The Shaktar tosses the telephone across the room to the Ebon.

"Shite! G'nd'r!" Terling catches the flying telephone, depressing buttons in the process.

"Yes?"

"A BPN? Great!" Terling straightens up. "What do you have?"

* * * * *

“A yellow?”

Cameron starts up the “bus” and pulls out onto the street below Rodriguez’s apartment complex.

“Yes, G’nd’r, a yellow. Is there a problem with that?” asks Terling.

G’nd’r “Har-rumps” in retort.

Cameron guides the “bus” through Downtown as his team members don their gear.

Terling and Rodriguez, sit back sipping coffee, their Deathsuits ready to go, pistols strapped to their legs.

The Shaktar, G’nd’r, straps on the last of his Crackshot, before checking over his Power Reaper.

Burn, a Stormer, clicks his Vibro Sabre on and off, on and off, on and off. He looks down at the sub-machine gun between his feet and smiles. Burn puts the Vibro Sabre down and picks up the sub-machine gun. He pulls the clip out of the sub-machine gun and checks the clip. Noticing the clip is full, he slaps it back in, before popping it back out and slapping it in, again.

Mia slugs down a Lumo, before standing up and pulling down her rifle. She checks the clip and slings the rifle over her shoulder. The butt of the rifle jostles against the sub-machine gun sitting on her hip. Mia rolls her left ankle, checking the comfort level of the snub pistol strapped to her lower-calf. She turns and checks herself in a mirror, making sure that her skin tone has turned deepest black.

Talston snores in the corner. The Waster not caring to waste time checking his weapons. He figures that if they aren’t still okay from the last time he used them, what’s the point? His automatic shotgun lulls between his feet, should strap wrapped around his right foot to prevent it from rolling across the “bus.”

“Oh. Hey, Rodriguez!” Cameron calls back from his pilot seat.

“Yeah, what is it, Cameron?”

“I got you a present. It’s in the overhead above Talston.” Cameron smiles, knowing the bad things that happen if you wake Talston before arriving on site for a BPN.

Rodriguez shoots a nasty look at Cameron before getting up and walking over to the sleeping Waster. Rodriguez carefully leans over the sleeping Brain Waster and opens the

cabinet. He reaches in and pulls out an emergency blanket with something wrapped in it. Shutting the cabinet, he steps away from the sleeping Waster. Sitting back down, he unwraps the blanket to reveal a SLA Blade.

“I remember how you complained that you didn’t have a good hand to hand weapon the last ‘Blue’ we went on. So, I hopped down to the local Derek’s Warehouse and picked one up for you.”

Rodriguez unsheathes the SLA blade, feeling its balance. He flips it about the compartment of the “bus” before re-sheathing it. “Thanks, Cameron. I’ll let you know how it does in combat.”

“Five minutes,” calls back Cameron, into the “bus.”

G’nd’r walks over to Talston and kicks him in the foot. “Wake up.”

The Brain Waster looks up at the Shaktar from behind crossed arms and grunts. Talston slowly sits upright. He reaches a hand up and wipes drool off of his chin. A bottle of whiskey rolls off the seat next to him, thudding against the floor.

The Shaktar glowers at the Brain Waster and goes back to his seat.

“Hey, Terling, what was it we were suppose to do on this BPN?” questions the Brain Waster while checking over his KPS Mangler AS.

“According to what Duke told me, and the fax of the BPN he sent, we’re on a Yellow. It seems a manager’s daughter went missing. She was last seen at the Tiplady Club. Her name is Marie D’Leal. She is twenty years old, stands 155 centimeters tall, and has a slim build. Her hair should be long, brown, and perfectly straight. She is known to hang with a group of Wraiths calling themselves Masters of the Hunt. They are a small-time gang of joy riders. She was wearing a plain black leather outfit, pants, shirt, low-cut boots, silver-hooped earrings, and a silver ring on her left pinky finger.”

“What makes that a Yellow?” ask G’nd’r.

“The ring. It seems that ‘daddy’ implanted data into the ring. The ring is hollow with a metal sheet in the hollow. We don’t know what the information contains.”

“Sop?” asks Rodriguez.

“Yes, if we can’t get the girl, get the ring,” answers Terling.

The “bus” stops, air pressure lowering the back end closer to the ground. “Last stop,” calls Cameron, “Wine, whiskey, and women.” He spins around in his pilot’s chair, smiling.

* * * * *

As the team approaches the front door to the club, the rain reminds them of its all-pervading presence. G'nd'r leans his head back, drinking in the water. He spits it out onto the side of the building. "Gonna be a long night." No one seems to notice his actions or comments.

Rodriguez steps through the door first. To his left are a Brain Waster and a Frother. The word "Security" is printed across the front of their shirts. To his right, a booth manned by a human female. Rodriguez steps up to the booth and plants his SCL Card and the BPN Fax on the window.

The female attendee rolls her eyes and speaks into the microphone, "You still have to pay cover charge. No one, not even SLOPS, get in for free."

"How much?" he asks.

"Hundred a piece."

"Damn rates are skyrocketing," moans Burn. His fingers rotate around his Vibro Sabres handle. His eyes never leave the door into the rest of the club. The doors are twenty feet away, past two more attendee windows.

Rodriguez tosses down a handful of UNIs. She snatches them off the counter. "Coat and gun check are at the next windows. Have a nice night." The latter statement more out of practice than from actually caring about another person.

The team continues down the corridor to the first of two windows. The words "Coat" and "Check" are stenciled in over the window. A Wraith female and a human female stand behind the counter chatting.

"Pardon me," interrupts Terling, "but I'd like to leave my coat here. With you," he stares at the Wraith Raider. She looks at him for a moment, then steps up to the window counter.

"Fine, five to cover the night."

Terling takes off his coat, revealing his Fen, and drops it on the counter. He tosses a UNI at the human. He leans over the counter and whispers to the Wraith Raider, "Ever hear of a human girl named Marie D'Leal?"

The Wraith Raider looks at Terling for half of an instance, then dryly says, "Nope." She looks to Rodriguez, you might want to keep your coat, honey, it's a bit nippy in the club for non-Wraiths." She smiles.

Talston and Burn snicker. Terling tosses them an angry look. Rodriguez smiles at the Wraith Raider and says, “Thank you for your concern.” He winks, before moving on to the next window.

G’nd’r reaches the gun-check window before the rest of the team. “But, I don’ wanna leave my Power Reaper with you.”

“I’m sorry, sir...” a young Ebon stutters.

“G’nd’r.”

“- sir G’nd’r. But, the rules state, ‘no guns.’” The Ebon points to the counter between the Shaktar and himself. Someone carved into the counter, “NO guns. And I’m afraid that I simply cannot let you go into the Tiplady Club with your,” he pauses as he looks at the Shaktar’s choice of weapon, “Power Reaper. It’s Club policy.”

“Fine,” says G’nd’r. He places the Power Reaper on the counter and waits to watch the youth try and move the gun. He steps back and shakes out his coat, fingering his MJL Power Disk. He smiles as much as Shaktars can smile.

“Talston,” states the Shaktar. “You gotta leave your weapons here.” The Shaktar nods to the Ebon youth behind the counter.

“Ah, man. ***** that. I ain’t going in there with no weapons. I remember the last time we went into a club without weapons on a BPN. ***** that!”

“Just your firearms, sir,” the youth squeaks out. “We only ask that you leave your guns here, not your other weapons.” The youth attempts to smile.

“Well, that’s just it, see. I ain’t got not other weapons. I just use my “Mangler” here,” he pulls up the shotgun for effect. “That’s all.”

“I’m sorry sir, but policy is policy.” The youth raises his hands in a defeatist manner.

“And I’m sure that Talston would be happy to oblige.” Mia snatches his shotgun out of his hand and puts it down on the counter next to her Gag and Buzzsaw. Her Snubber lies neatly covered by her trenchcoat.

Noticing the lack of a third gun, Talston looks at Mia and says, “*****,” before moving on. She smiles and drops some UNIs.

Terling, Rodriguez and Burn turn their guns over quickly, Rodriguez leaving the team’s name as a reference for the Ebon youth.

* * * * *

Cold air from the ventilation system breathes down Isis' neck, as she makes her way across the dance floor to the bar. It's been a long day for Isis. First, she loses her meager job. Then, Anton kicks her out of his apartment. The bastard. How dare he? After all she's done for him. Damn him. So, she goes over to Iris' place to crash, only to find that Iris' boyfriend is over. With that, Isis goes by her ex's place, hoping that maybe Brodie will let her in for the night. He says sure, but then she notices that he has some other female in the apartment with him. She begs off, stating that she doesn't want to intrude. Eventually, she found her way here. Now, all she has to do is find a room for the night.

"Blizzard," she says to the bartender. She takes the drink and turns around to look across the dance floor, hoping to find someone with whom to spend the night. She glances toward the door and notices a handful of people walk into the club. "What is this, some kind of joke?" No one hears her question over the speaker system.

She watches as two Ebons, a Brain Waster, a Shaktar, a Stormer, and a human all filter into the club. They all stand uneasily across the entrance platform. Slowly, the clubbers notice the fact that they are being watched by a bunch of goons. And they quickly ignore the ignoble idiots who don't know their way through the club.

* * * * *

"Damn it, I can't see a thing."

"Let your eyes adjust," replies G'nd'r.

"I'll hit the main bar," Mia says before walking away from the group.

"Me, too," chimes in Talston. "I need a drink."

Mia and Talston descend a set of stairs to the edge of the dance floor. Cold air whips across their bodies showing them their own breathe. As they look across the dance floor, they notice the club is heavily populated with Wraith Raiders. They skirt around the dance floor and hit the main bar.

* * * * *

"Hmmm, I think I will go talk to the DJ. I don't like this music." Burn walks across a cat walk towards the DJ booth.

A couple of kids making out fail to notice Burn walking towards them. He stops in front of them. They still fail to notice his presence. He nudges one of them with his right foot. Yet, they still fail to notice them. He kneels down next to them, pulls out his Vibro Sabre and turns it on. The "snick" and "hum" startle the closest kid. He almost falls off the catwalk.

The kid, a human, turns to face Burn. “Shit, mother *****. Why’d you have to go and do that for?” His partner, a Wraith Raider, turns away, as if embarrassed somehow.

“You are in my way and didn’t react to my presence. I thought that it would get your presence. Now, please move. I must talk to the DJ about this horrible music.” Burn stands up, turning off and putting away the Vibro Sabre.

“***** you, mother *****. I ain’t moving for nobody that don’t like this music.” The boy turns back to his girlfriend, who is staring up at Burn.

Burn reaches down and picks up the boy by his clothing. The boy flails his arms about, afraid of falling the sixty meters to the dance floor. “Put me down, you stupid creation!”

Burn lets go of the boy with his right hand and uses it to slap him across the back of the head. “Obviously, you didn’t hear me. I said, ‘You are in my way.’. Now, I am forced to remove you from my presence.”

“What? Of, *****, ***** , *****! Don’t drop me man. I’ll move, I’ll move.” The boy’s arms and legs continue flailing.

Burn turns and tosses the boy back to the entrance landing. A snapping noise clues G’nd’r, Rodriguez and Terling in to the fact that the boy fell incorrectly, breaking his arm.

“Should have rolled with the fall,” laughs G’nd’r.

“Dance floor?” asks Terling, looking at his two compatriots.

“Dance floor,” replies Rodriguez.

“I’ll wait here,” says the Shaktar. He steps back away from the railing and leans against the wall.

* * * *

Burn turns back around and the Wraith Raider female has stood and moved out of his way. “Thank you,” he says, brushing by her.

Twenty more steps and he is at the DJ booth door. He tries the door knob and finds it locked. He slams his left fist against it three times. The door shakes in its hinges. He notices a shadow fall across the peep whole and pulls his SCL Card out of his pocket.

A weasely looking Wraith Raider opens the door, headphones down around his neck. “Yeah? Whachoo want, man?”

Burn holds his SCL Card in the Wraith Raiders face. “Burn. SLOP. Need to ask you questions.” He puts the SCL Card away.

“Man, I’m working here. I ain’t got no time for answerin’ your questions.”

Burns steps forward. The Wraith Raider tries to shut the door. Burn slams one fist against the door and grabs the shit of the Wraith Raider with the other hand. Burn forces his way into the room and slams the door shut, behind him.

Electronics light up the booth. Lights flash and flicker, reflecting off of the mirrored ceiling and see-through flooring.

...to be continued.

Sla Industries is property of Cubicle 7 Entertainment.

Links of note.

This section will contain links back to the personal or favorite sites that contributors to Inner Voice suggest. Want a link to your site to appear in an issue of Inner Voice? Well then submit some material and include a note letting us know about the link you want added it. It's that easy.



www.maxhattuer.com

PsychoThriller: a collection of articles for various RPGs, most notably for Sla Industries, Kult and a growing collection of Talislanta material.



<http://peteramthor.darkgod.net>

Voices in my Head: personal site of PeterAmthor.



<http://www.shinies.net/village/html/>

The Village: a gaming site ran by Derek Stoelting aka Oaxaca.

Notes at the end.

Well that's it for the first issue of Inner Voices. Hope you enjoyed what was offered up inside. Remember to check in the first few pages for submission information and where to send any comments or criticisms.

Next issue:

Waterways of Metropolis continues

All at Once continues

Story out of Sequence continues

Also whatever submissions we get between now and then.